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' G W U N D E R '

by
Martin Gasser

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
MASTER OF FINE ARTS

MFA PHOTOGRAPHY PROGRAM
SCHOOL OF PHOTOGRAPHIC ARTS AND SCIENCES
ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK
August 1, 1980

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International Student Scholarship Fund Committee

Dr. Richard D. Zakia, Mr. John Pfahl, Mr. Hans Zandvoort,

Mr. Herbert Johnson, Mr. Werner Rebsamen

Mr. John Hafey

Mr. John Wiesenthal

Miss Noryah Harun

DEDICATION

To my parents,

to Ueli,

to Peter,

to Vreni

and to Noryah

This is the written report of a thesis project which was done in the form of a book. This book was produced as a dummy consisting of fifty-five double pages (spreads). The book was planned and executed in all details and it is ready to be printed.

The visual part includes a number of photo-sequences: seventy-seven black and white photographs and five postcards. Within these series of images are sequences of seven Swiss poems, seven excerpts from American TV commercials, seven Malay proverbs, seven quotations from the MFA Handbook, passages from seven books dealing with different concepts of photography and seven footnotes.

The main theme of the book is the challenge of conventional relationships between reality and its depiction in the photograph. Other themes appearing are visual and literal comments on different processes involved in the whole thesis project, ie. the process of going through the MFA Program, the process of making or taking photographs, the photographic process itself, the process of planning and making the book and the process of looking through the book.

The whole project (photographs, texts, the book, the show) was planned to encompass simultaneously everything a photographer could possibly deal with within the given framework.

| | | |
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| Chapter II | ANALYSIS OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK | pages 9-11 |
| Chapter III | EXPLANATION OF ONE SEQUENCE OF PHOTOGRAPHS IN THE BOOK | pages 11-15 |
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| | Installation of Thesis Exhibition | slides 123-129 |

gwunder

wesdi

vorgwunder

faschverschprängt

dänkgeng

essygkeswunder

dass schomänge

sygwundernase

wundusem

gwunderlödli

zogeheig

let's see through the hidden camera
go with confidence
the price won't stop you

Satu tangan bilangan lima,
Dua tangan bilangan sepuluh.
Saya bertanam biji delima,
Apa sebab peria tumbuh ?

to be continued on page 7

Herrn Martin Gasser



U
Martin Gasser

Mr.
Martin Gasser

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Martin G a s s e r

Rochester /NY 14623

U S A

Mr Martin Gasser

P PHG 6

MARTIN GASSER

3

14623

One thing I did before I started working on my thesis was to analyse my previous photographic work. My intention in the thesis was to "recreate the learning process I went through so far in a compact body of work capable of communicating my experiences"*. I started taking photographs on a nice Sunday in Winter 1964. An uncle of mine had come to visit us. We were having coffee after lunch and my father and my uncle were discussing some photographic problems. Both my father and my uncle were very active amateur photographers. Suddenly, I remembered that my father had an old camera in his desk which he seldom used. I dug it out and showed it to my uncle. It was a single-lens reflex camera. He liked the camera and gave me a film and told me to go and take some pictures in order to find out whether it was working properly. I went around the house and photographed everything I thought was interesting. My uncle took the film with him, developed it and sent me the prints a couple of weeks later. Most of the pictures were out of focus, but he encouraged me to continue and to send him the exposed films. I did this for several years and I guess I really improved. The pictures I took were mostly snapshots or reportage type of pictures. This first period of photographic 'work' found its climax in 1970 when I won the first prize in a photo competition with a photograph of a soap-box car race.

During my high school period I built my own darkroom in the basement of our house and photographed with a half-format camera and a Rollei-Flex. I made a lot of darkroom experiments and reportages during my extensive travels in Europe. I also did photo essays for

* from my first proposal which was rejected by the MFA committee;

a local newspaper. By 1974 I decided to major in photography for my undergraduate studies, although I was very interested and active in music and literature.

This time, it was a neighbour who showed me the way. This neighbour, a dye-transfer specialist, brought me into contact with the Photographic Institute at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich. At that time I was convinced that one could only be creative over a longer period of time in one medium (in my case photography) if one completely understood not only the aesthetic qualities of the medium but especially all the techniques involved as well. So I was more than happy to be able to enroll in the program of Scientific Photography which would provide me with a most thorough background. During the four years with my teacher, Prof. Dr. Tomamichel, I did a variety of things within the field of photography: from non-silver processes to computer generated photographs; variations from black and white to three color photography and 12-color facsimile offset printing; from microfilm to 8X10 inch view camera and 3X3 feet reproductions; from reportage to fashion, portraiture, architectural and industrial photography; from 8-channel tone recordings to 16 mm color film and 80.000 frames per second highspeed film. These experiences and the work with my teacher (an immensely knowledgeable scientist, artist and also a fine human being) shaped me and my perception of the medium very strongly.

Along with my work at the Photographic Institute, I did my own work which reflected my decreasing concern with photography as a representation of reality. The photographic process itself became a main theme. The idea of duration or 'process' as a transitional stage between two points in time or space became important. In portraiture, for example, I started to extend the one portrait

into a series of images taken over a certain period of time. My work dealing with the photographic process was strongly influenced by my brother and his avant-garde music, by studies of Dada and Surrealism and the work of a group of photographers which, in 1968, had produced the exhibition 'Generative Photographie' in Germany. This group dealt with reducing photography to what used to be merely one of its instrumental components (ie. the effect of light on photographic paper or chemical reactions). About half of the work I did during the two years MFA Program was concerned with the process of photography or photography as an 'art form'. The other half was strongly conceptual. By 'conceptual' I mean a certain working process: I have an idea or message I want to get across. It is not a picture I want to take or an object of which I want to take a picture. It is a statement I want to make. Then I think about how I could express this opinion visually: What kind of photographs, which objects and juxtaposed with what? These questions I answer first, before I take the photograph. Most of the ideas I came up with were reactions to experiences I had here in Rochester. One important factor was of course my being exposed to a different culture. Under the influence of this new environment and the teachers here at RIT my work has certainly become more 'americanized', but I guess for most of the people here I am still European. This, my background, is the basis for my thesis work. I wanted to "recreate the learning process I went through" and "expand on my previous investigations in a compact body of work"*.

* from my second thesis proposal which was accepted by the MFA committee; Appendix, pages 23-26

Before I go into the relationships between my background and my thesis project, I would like to explain why I chose the book form for the work.

During the time at the Photographic Institute I discovered Walter Benjamin's 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction'.

He wrote: "To an even greater degree the work of art reproduced becomes the work of art designed for reproducibility". And when I was dealing with computer art I read Herbert W. Franke*: "Concepts like 'original' or 'unique' lose their significance. The possibility of reproduction and duplication is an integral part of the production process, and each realization of the idea is of equal value with all others." These thoughts and also my work with the offset printing process convinced me that the photo book is in fact the medium that communicates the most in the most photographic way. Reproduction is an inherent quality of photography which is only limited by either the laziness or incapability of the individual photographer or by the idea of having to limit the editions in order to boost prices on the market. There is no photographic image that could not be reproduced with a proper printing method (photographic or lithographic). To be honest, I think that producing a 'fine photographic print' is rather easy. When I started at the Photographic Institute in Zurich, 'fine printing' was the first thing I had to learn and from then on it was a matter of course.

A large part of 'Fine Art' photography seems to escape into fancy (mostly antique) and extremely time consuming printing or even

* Franke is an Austrian scientist and writer who studied physics, chemistry, psychology and philosophy at the University of Vienna. (see Bibliography, No. 4)

print-making methods, instead of being concerned with this unique quality of reproducibility, making it part of the work.

For my part, I decided to design my work in a way that it could be reproduced as a book. I made book format, number of pages, and pictures, their formats, layout, type, screening, offset printing etc. part of my work. It is a 'Gesamtkunstwerk' which, as a book in a large edition, is entirely my work. Nothing will be destroyed, distorted or lost by the printing process, because the imperfections and also the advantages of the printing process are part of the work.

The book provided me with a defined space within which I could work. It is an extended picture frame. The book cover and the back become the frame and what is within is the image. The same happened in the exhibition: the gallery became the frame and the environment I created within this frame was the image.

Of course, the gallery and the book are different frames with different characteristics which determine to a large extent how the image has to be presented or how it will be perceived. A wooden baroque frame works differently than a thin aluminum frame.

Within this book frame I am dealing with seven 'themes' which are more or less derived from my 'previous investigations'. These themes are arranged in a sequence which reflects somewhat my own history with the medium of photography and is aimed at the demonstration of differences between the common notion of reality and its depiction in the photograph. In order to explain the sequence to the interested reader, I titled the themes or parts as follows: (see also the fold out in Chapter II)

- I Photography as Document of Reality. (Straight documentary photography. Facts. Truth.)
- II Influence of the Photographic Process. (Distortions made by deliberate use of elements of the photographic process.)
- III Relative Document of Reality. (Documentary photography with the awareness of the shortcomings of the photographic process. Facts? Truth?)
- IV Photography as Flat Surface within Reality. (The photograph is after all only a flat piece of paper, which is subject to an infinite number of interpretations.)
- V Photograph becomes its own white Reverse Side. (It is also the empty, unexposed and undeveloped image carrier which accepts anything as an image. It is this white square photographers deal and play with. It is not only a mirror (of reality) with a memory, it is also the screen onto which one can project one's free imagination.)
- VI White Plane assumes Images independent from surrounding Reality. (As a consequence, the images appearing on the picture surface contradict the photographic representation.)
- VII Images assume different Meanings. (The emphasis has shifted from images about certain objects to the presentation or juxtaposition of certain kinds of objects within a concept or environment; thus requiring a completely different way of looking at these images in order to be able to understand their meaning in the broader context of the book.)

Along with the seven themes, but not simply parallel, I arranged passages from seven books dealing with different concepts of photography (Bibliography, No.1-7; Appendix, pages 1-7). These passages are a sequence going through the whole book; again reflecting my learning process over the years.

The seventy-seven photographs, the five postcards and these theoretical texts are the primary material for the book. All the individual parts together add up to the statement I want to make with my work. Someone picking out a few of the photographs of the book, reading one text or two, would never be able to understand the whole.

In my opinion, this primary material is ordered in an extremely simple but perhaps unusual way. I felt very comfortable in adding some associative materials. These materials which were part of the book concept from the very beginning, are the following: parts from the MFA Handbook reflecting my going through the MFA Program with thesis procedures and commencement; texts representing the cultures and languages I am primarily involved with (Swiss, American, Malay); footnotes either referring to the book as a concept or to music.

But still, with all these additional associative materials, the book is very simply structured (see Chapter II).

A last element I would like to talk about is music. From the very beginning of my thesis work, I thought about the book as a piece of music, because looking at a book from beginning to end is like listening to a piece of music. It is an event with a definite time dimension. A book has rhythm that can be composed and it has dynamics that can be composed as well. And that is what I did, I composed a book. I gave it (almost parallel to the sequence of the seven thematical parts) a musical form of five parts: Introduction, Exposition, Development, Cadenza, Coda. This musical structure was translated into two visual elements: a. the complexity of the images in terms of amount of information per picture, and b. into the layout of the exhibition. These musical components seem to have come across very strongly, be-

cause they inspired the Rochester composer John Wiesen-
thal to write a piece for guitar and prepared tape which he played as a
premiere performance at the opening of the thesis exhibition.
I had translated musical ideas into visual material and Wiesen-
thal in turn transformed them back into music. He added a new
dimension to my work. He explained it from a different viewpoint
and created something entirely new. My book played its role in
a creative process of one person, a musician.

profülaxe

||

däwo

aube

gschpöttlet

heig

autagbrav

amorge

znüüni

zmittag

zimis

uznacht

sygdibeshti

profülaxe

gägehungertod

sygschynts

arehärzverfettig

gschtorbe

my friends what is HAMBURGER

you're looking at a superbly engineered instrument

the future belongs to the efficient

now reduced up to fifty percent

Hitam mata itu, dimanakan boleh bercerai dengan putihnya ?

crescendo

martin gasser

~~10~~ durch ~~Winter~~

martin gasser

Mr. Martin Gasser

Mr. Martin Gasser

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275 Kimball Drive
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Martin Gasser

Martin

g
BOLLWERK
Gasser

ANALYSIS OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

Since my thesis project is of a relative complex nature and since I wanted to have deliberate control over as many factors as possible, I designed a plan for the book. This plan consisted at the beginning of 55 empty double spaces (spreads) which I filled in along with my planning. I designed all the different levels I was dealing with before I made any photographs for the book. Now, after the work is finished, this plan reveals all the structures on which I based the book.

The plan served also as the basic score for John Wiesenthal's piece for guitar and prepared tape.

Explanations to Numbers 1-13 on the foldout

1. Theme: sequence of the 7 themes with which I am dealing in the 77 photographs.
2. Spread Number: each spread (double page) has a number (1-55).
3. Location: where the photographs were taken


| | | | | |
|--------------------|---|-------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| W = Weinfelden | } | Switzerland | } | black and white photographs |
| F = Frauenfeld | | | | |
| Z = Zurich | | | | |
| R = Rochester | | | | |
| P = color postcard | | | | |

4. Music: basic musical structure (see Chapter I, page 7)
- 5-9. All associative texts (Documentary, Swiss-German, American, Malay, Footnotes) are ordered in a colotomic structure. This colotomic structure is the basis of most native music of Southeast Asia and has been adopted into the 20th century avant-garde music. Each page in the book represents one beat or one space to be filled by an event. The different levels of texts (like the different sizes of gongs in the Southeast Asian Gamelan music) fill the spaces in exactly defined intervals. For example, the documentary texts occur every 16 beats. The whole structure is based on 16. However, only in the Cadenza are all the spaces filled. Note also that the Cadenza does not have folio numbers in order to indicate that it is a free form.
10. Theoretical Texts: they are placed according to the themes.
11. White and Black Pages: this shows the distribution of empty spaces in the book.
12. Dates: indicates the dates when I finished a whole page,
(April 7th - April 29th, 1980).

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- 12. Dates: indicates the dates when I finished a whole page, (April 7th - April 29th, 1980).

| 1. THEME | I PHOTOGRAPH AS DOCUMENT OF REALITY | | | II INFLUENCE OF THE PH | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|------|------|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 2. SPREAD NO | | | | | | | | |
| 3. LOCATION | PW W | FF F | RZ Z | R | R | R | R | R |
| 4. MUSIC | INTRODUCTION | | | EXPOSITION, EXPOSITION | | | | |
| 5. LOCUS | 1. 16 BEATS 2. 16 BEATS 3. 16 BEATS 4. 16 BEATS 5. 16 BEATS 6. 16 BEATS 7. 16 BEATS 8. 16 BEATS 9. 16 BEATS 10. 16 BEATS 11. 16 BEATS 12. 16 BEATS 13. 16 BEATS | | | 1. 16 BEATS 2. 16 BEATS 3. 16 BEATS 4. 16 BEATS 5. 16 BEATS 6. 16 BEATS 7. 16 BEATS 8. 16 BEATS 9. 16 BEATS 10. 16 BEATS 11. 16 BEATS 12. 16 BEATS 13. 16 BEATS | | | | |
| 6. SWISS-GERMAN | | | | | | | | |
| 7. AMERICAN | 1. 16 BEATS 2. 16 BEATS 3. 16 BEATS 4. 16 BEATS 5. 16 BEATS 6. 16 BEATS 7. 16 BEATS 8. 16 BEATS 9. 16 BEATS 10. 16 BEATS 11. 16 BEATS 12. 16 BEATS 13. 16 BEATS | | | 1. 16 BEATS 2. 16 BEATS 3. 16 BEATS 4. 16 BEATS 5. 16 BEATS 6. 16 BEATS 7. 16 BEATS 8. 16 BEATS 9. 16 BEATS 10. 16 BEATS 11. 16 BEATS 12. 16 BEATS 13. 16 BEATS | | | | |
| 8. MALAY 1-7 FOOTNOTES 1-16 | | | | | | | | |
| 9. FOLIO | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 10. THEORETICAL | I | | | II | | | | |
| 11. WHITE AND BLACK PAGES | | | | | | | | |
| 12. ADDRESSES | 1. 16 BEATS 2. 16 BEATS 3. 16 BEATS 4. 16 BEATS 5. 16 BEATS 6. 16 BEATS 7. 16 BEATS 8. 16 BEATS 9. 16 BEATS 10. 16 BEATS 11. 16 BEATS 12. 16 BEATS 13. 16 BEATS | | | 1. 16 BEATS 2. 16 BEATS 3. 16 BEATS 4. 16 BEATS 5. 16 BEATS 6. 16 BEATS 7. 16 BEATS 8. 16 BEATS 9. 16 BEATS 10. 16 BEATS 11. 16 BEATS 12. 16 BEATS 13. 16 BEATS | | | | |
| 13. PRINTS FINISHED | | | | | | | | |



'RECLAIMING'
DOCUMENTS
OF
REALITY

IV PHOTOGRAPH AS A
FLAT SURFACE
WITHIN REALITY

V
 INTEGRATED RECORD IS OWN WHITE
 RAYMOND, SURE

VI

[illegible]

[illegible]

tümmi



geng
weni
adidänke
dänkeni
weninume
jung
schön
urychwär
umytümmi
ischgrossgnue
fürzgloube
dassmygschydi
längti

early American traditional contemporary
it tastes like home-made
and then
indigestion

Gulai sedap, nasi mentah, nasi sedap, gulai mentah.

Mr. Martin Gasser

Martin Gasser

21753 6 5406
03363606ASSKMZ275M2& 3
MK MARTIN GASSER EXP 1280

MARTIN GASSER

Mr
Martin Gasser

Mr.
Martin Gasser

Martin Gasser

Spreads No. 32,33

These two spreads mark the beginning of the Cadenza, the most playful and virtuosic part of the whole book. They also represent very strongly one of my central concerns which is to demonstrate that it is possible to create photographs representing a reality which does not physically exist. In the case of the three photographs on spreads 32 and 33, I abandon the one-point perspective, but produce images which are still most believable. In fact, most people do not realize the distortion.

See the photographs on the following three pages.

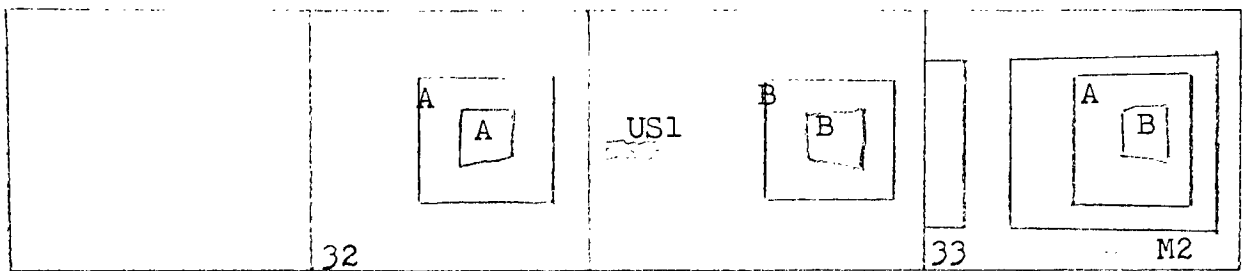


den camera





Sketch



A: picture of a parking lot with a MERIT billboard

US1: first American text: let's see through the hidden camera
go with confidence

the price won't stop you

B: same scene as in A, but closer and from another angle

C: this picture consists of the billboard from B and the
surroundings from A; plus the whole picture is in a frame
hanging on the wall of a gallery.

M2: the Malay proverb written on the gallery wall says:

"The black of the eye and the white,

how can they be parted ?"

lugi

dlüt
sylugihüng

wedau
lugene
zeutisch
wo autag
verzeutwärde
chiemsch
ufuzälegi
milione

gschwigenisch
mängisch
ogloge

udi ugseite
lugene
sy überhoupt
nüme z zeue

watch this familiar demonstration
"if it tastes that rich, i don't wanna stop"
it is icy-hot pain relief
100% pure pain reliever
many financing plans are available

Ada laut, adalah ikan.

Martin Gasser

Encik Martin Gasser

Martin Gasser

MARTIN GASSER

Please tear along this line and return top p

1970 11 13

Mr. Martin Gasser

Mr. Martin Gasser

This documentation consists of 17 pages from the 450 pages of notes, plans, drawings, etc. which I accumulated during the thesis work. It shows how I was working from the first thought I wrote down to the TOUR STOP 7 at the end.

① THE SIS ①

First time to write something for the thesis April 11, 7

Waiting, waiting, waiting, for, thinking, so,
Jogging (7 laps) chosen

Ideas: Thesis sharing (= swiss german schäring, schär of) Jan 26-79
Erinnerungsbilder, souvenirs, "reminds me of"
Leubilder

MONTAGE (idee vom Buch) Composite imagery (shown at GEH)

Pigment print (Paper Winter/Spring 78/79) dropped, too historic, process

series Taking a picture March 79 montage, real world interference in the darkroom. Pure sense, story

a made picture of a taken picture

This led to the thinking about illusion, interference on the surface ('photographical') not painted, drawn, etched, etc.

=> plains illusion, perspective => sketch I + II
simple, common scene, picture itself must be more attractive, less intellectual, more visual Ch. Arnold
Idea great.

abilities explore perspective, illusion play of planning taking, printing (=> making) absurdity, surrealism (diff levels) sw → color. All pictures (not only a part of them) Switzerland, not USA.

Book and show as Gesamtkunstwerk (Popkin, Dali, Ernst)

ults Book including finished prints, series, the process itself, documentation, drawings, texts (Sonne, Enfi etc, Reproduction (Benjamin))

FORMAT:
8 x 10

based on 8 x 10

10 25,4

181

25

3,4

6,4 x 8

$$11 \times 14 = 27,9 \times 35,6 \text{ cm}$$

14,2 cm

5,12 x 6,4

6,4

6,4

20,3 x 25,4

16,2 x 20,3

13 x 16,2

10,4 x 13

inch

8 x 10

8 x 8

6,4 x 8

5,12 x 6,4

4,1 x 5,12

4,1 x 4,1

cm

20,3 x 25,4 - **A**

20,3 x 20,3 - **B**

16,2 x 20,3 - **C**

13 x 16,2 - **D**

10,3 x 13 - **E**

10,3 x 10,3 - **F**

1,25 x

(based on 24 x 36 cm (138 mm format))

A: 20,3 x 30,5 29 / 27,9

C: 16,2 x 24,3 24,2 / 25,1 / 22,9 / 22,7

D: 13 x 19,5

E: 10,3 x 15,5 0,1 C

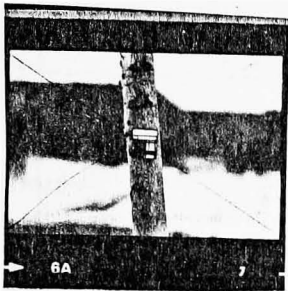
according to pyramint grid

March 6/80 20

IV

Re-shooting pages

17-22



1. window^① has to be about $\frac{1}{3}$ of height
(17) and about in the middle
background ~~unfocused~~ not in focus



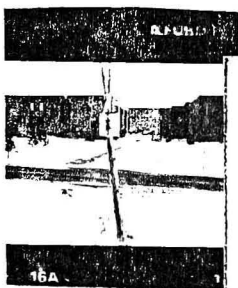
2. window^② matches
(18) background in focus
window not fixed



3. window^③
slightly
fixed
window



(19) window^④ almost
90° fixed
picture still
vibr



50c

GWUNDER, a book by Martin Gasser at RIT
first published by Martin Gasser.
New! Improved!
G W U N D E R

Save 50c

Martin Gasser,

Offer good
only in
the 50
United
States.

50c

p 29-34

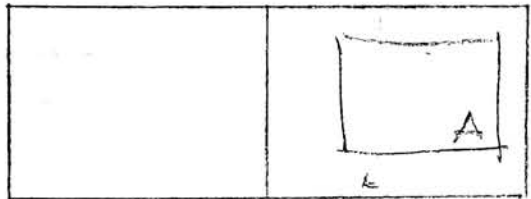
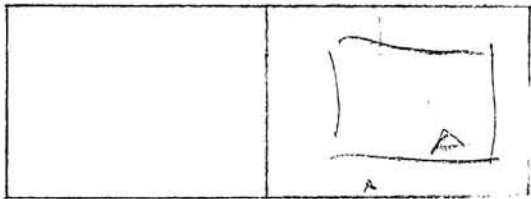
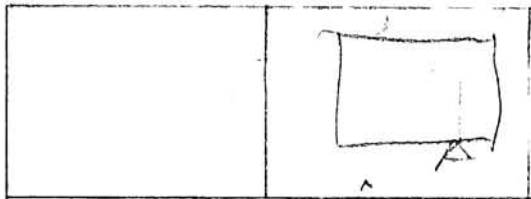
mark 6/70

V-VI

21a



balance



white frame starts
converge down town.
1st small

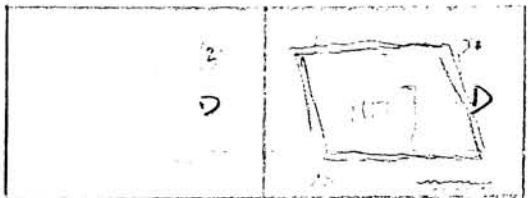
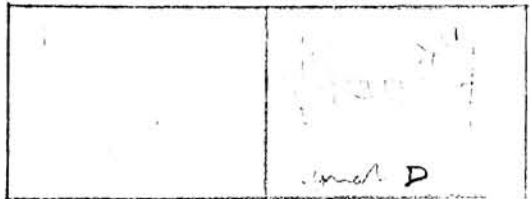
pass by

it changes according
to perspective lines

29-31

68 W.V.P.

VI
x
per



1 brown house with
white in front + one or
two windows in foreground

2 other angles with other
spectator but windows stay
the same
in 3rd water frame

same frame with
brick wall + 2 focal plane

Laden 2

GWUNDER 1,5 x 10 inch

MARTIN GASSER 1 x 10 inch

for title page

GWUNDER 1 x 5,8 inch

DEDICATION

10,3 cm

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

10,3 cm

INTRODUCTION

10,3 cm

~~PART THREE~~

~~10,3 cm~~

~~to be continued~~

like regular text

~~CHAPTER SEVEN~~

~~10,3 cm~~

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1 2 3 4 5 ... ~~to 32~~ to 32

46-55

20070

1.44.1 18/11
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John H. Fay

GWUNDER

3/4

43/4

DEDICATION

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INTRODUCTION

3 1/2

MAY 3-9, 1980

121%

31
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20 31 32

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II Benjamin 1931

p.7

influence of process
printing

26, 125, 229, 238/39
2 1 3

Earlier much futile thought had been devoted to the question of whether photography is an art. The primary question whether the very invention of photography had not transformed the entire nature of art—was not raised. (2, 229)

The secular cult of beauty, developed during the Renaissance and prevailing for three centuries, clearly showed that ritualistic basis in its decline and the first deep crisis which befell it. With the advent of the first truly revolutionary means of reproduction, photography, simultaneously with the rise of socialism, art sensed the approaching crisis which has become evident a century later. At the time, art reacted with the doctrine of *l'art pour l'art*, that is, with a theology of art. This gave rise to what might be called a negative theology in the form of the idea of "pure" art, which not only denied any social function of art but also any categorizing by subject matter. (In poetry, Mallarmé was the first to take this position.)

An analysis of art in the age of mechanical reproduction must do justice to these relationships, for they lead us to an all-important insight: for the first time in world history, mechanical reproduction emancipates the work of art from its parasitical dependence on ritual. To an ever greater degree the work of art reproduced becomes the work of art designed for reproducibility. From a photographic negative, for example, one can make any number of prints; to ask for the "authentic" print makes no sense. But the instant the criterion of authenticity ceases to be applicable to artistic production, the total function of art is reversed. Instead of being based on ritual, it begins to be based on another practice—politics. (2, 226)

Evidently a different nature opens itself to the camera than opens to the naked eye—if only because an unconsciously penetrated space is substituted for a space consciously explored by man. (2, 238)

reg type / 10.3 cm

in the book itself
rest in things

Jan 30/80 285

TEXTS IN THESIS LEVELS:

DOCUMENTATION on work

- Thesis purpose all versions
- Thesis Proposal / Minutes p 89/93/135/147A
- from the MFA Handbook
- Techniques used Film/Paper

purpose / proposal / acceptance / work
technique / thesis / commencement

visual parallel

level of content

parallel to
sequence of
book

BIOGRAPHICAL / self analytical, critical

from ^{accepted} Thesis Proposal + others

Influence / Reaction

4 Days

parts from "Biographie" 19 - 1978

THEORETICAL (photo)

- Book (Neh Kauer) 'Music' form / theory
- from Thesis Proposal
- Benjamin etc.
- Generative photo / computer
- Perception
- Conceptual art

etc.

I personal / subject
matter Switz → Rock
V-proposals diff stages

III Themes 1-VII

ASSOCIATIONS at random distributed

Swiss Sam Siff (Swiss) Zwieler

Malay proverbs

Hommage to several people ~~look for Baerrow~~ etc. music signals ff

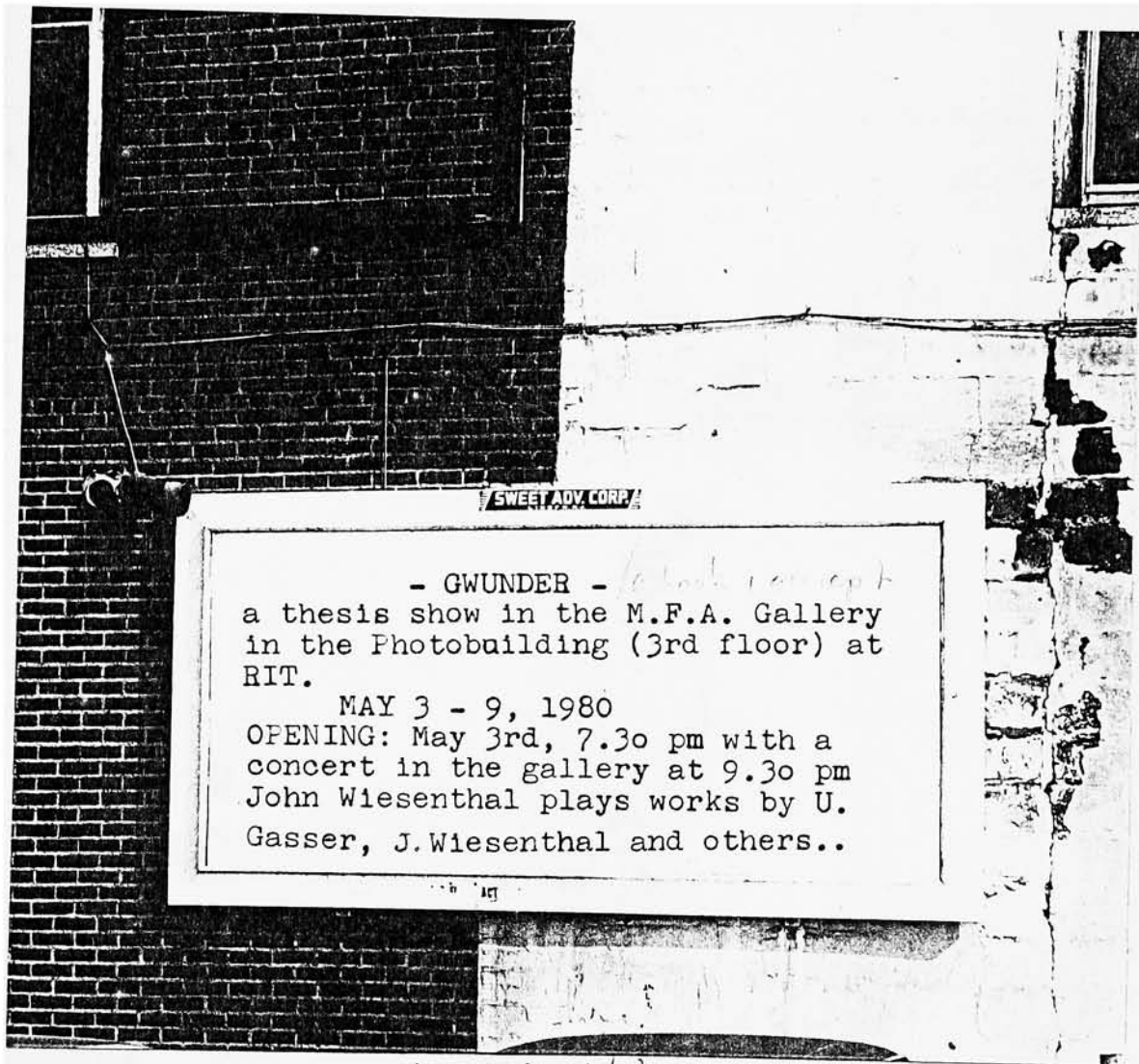
Book

~~Members~~

painting by Peter
Music from Keli
visual book "signals"
Portrait. Grown / Peter
Family. Nanyah

1/2 page 5/80
40

GWUNDER



- GWUNDER - *a look concept*
a thesis show in the M.F.A. Gallery
in the Photobuilding (3rd floor) at
RIT.

MAY 3 - 9, 1980

OPENING: May 3rd, 7.30 pm with a
concert in the gallery at 9.30 pm
John Wiesenthal plays works by U.
Gasser, J. Wiesenthal and others..

MAY 3-9/80

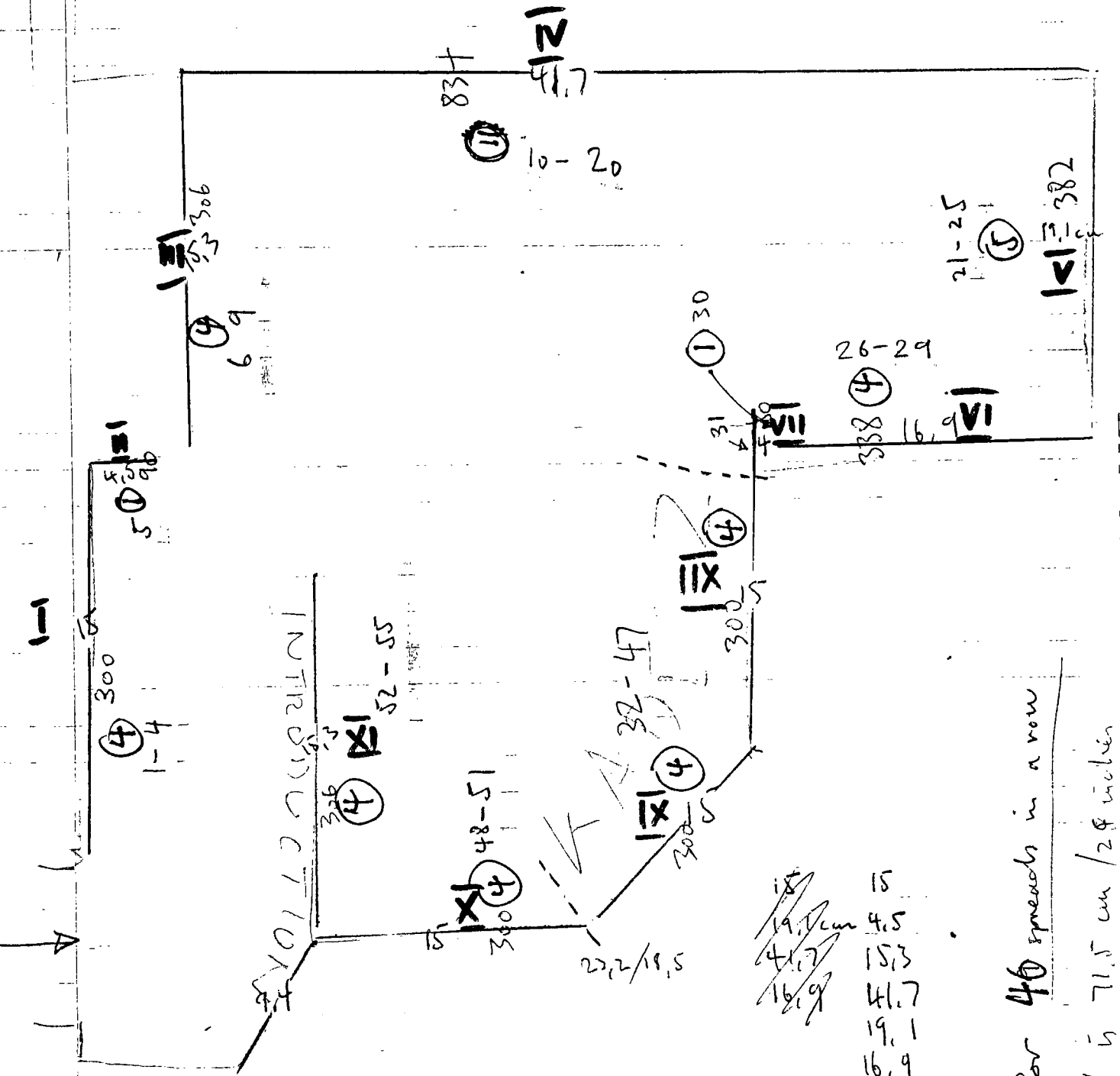
MARTIN GASSER

Hand 15

frame unit out (on above) and
behind colored paper with text

March 23/80
335

tot No of spreads (46) in a row



15
19.1
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176.8 x 4 = 35.36 m

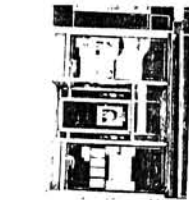
⇒ Room for 46 spreads in a row
one spread is 71.5 cm / 28 inches

THINGS

Politics

Kennedy

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✓ (for color refer to

refer to Benjamin
p.7

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Thesis

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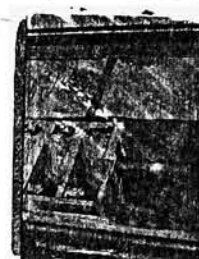
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Karten 2 on the wall

1. 1. 31

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Mr Doris Van
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R1 47

local
slippers

April 12/80 Idea: ask RITSA for
sponsorship

April 16: I talked to Pura (Pres of RITSA)
about sponsorship; in positive
we'll talk about it tomorrow in
board meeting.

Rolling out 15.00

Wojmans on 31 *payed*

| | | |
|-------------|------|------|
| Ammerthaler | 3.18 | 5.35 |
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| Appenzeller | 5.28 | 4.70 |
| Ziger | -89 | -89 |
| Gerber | 1.79 | 1.79 |
| Brie | | 4.21 |

NET

Crackers

Very table

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THANI

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CENTURY DISCOUNT LIQUOR & WINE

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have you heard what happened to chocolate
it's America's number one nail protection
watch for the fifty cent coupon

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Mr. Martin Gasser



Herrn Martin Gasser

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MR MARTIN GASSER

Mr. Martin Gasser

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☐ Send America's Magnificent Mountains
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☐ In addition to these four

GASSER MARTIN

#

ZIP CODE

Martin Gasser

EXP DTE 10800
MARTIN GASSER

During the time 'GWUNDER' was exhibited I made the observation that only a few viewers were really active and tried to really get into the work. Perhaps my thesis project was too different and complex. In addition it was personal and not intended for any particular audience. If I ask myself as a viewer of my own work, I think I succeeded in what I was trying to do: a book about myself, how I see the medium of photography and how I perceive the visual world through this medium.

Perhaps many students and teachers here at RIT just did not expect something like 'GWUNDER' ?

".....for as long as possible and by whatever means available, the organism will ward off the perception of the unexpected, those things which do not fit his prevailing set.....most people come to depend upon a certain constancy in their environment and, save under special conditions, attempt to ward off variations from this state of affairs: 'Thar ain't no such animal,' the hayseed is reported to have said on seeing his first giraffe". (Jerome Bruner)

I know that 'GWUNDER' is not an easy book to look at; I did not intend to make it that way. It was not designed for a commercial purpose; it is the product of several processes which took place in an ideal setting: school. I tried to realize a concept without making any concessions to a potential 'market'.

"The process of organization enables us to package the same total amount of information into far fewer symbols and so eases the task of remembering." (George Miller)

Based on this statement, I assumed that I could package a larger amount of information into a fixed number of symbols (seventy-seven photographs on fifty-five spreads) if I tried to achieve a

high degree of order in my work. I explained the ordering structures in Chapter II. They are simple and consistent throughout the whole book and allow me to deal with the issues I described in Chapter I on several levels simultaneously, in progressive sequences or deliberately reversed.

"Order and complexity, however, cannot exist without each other. Complexity without order produces confusion; order without complexity produces boredom. Although order is needed to cope with both the inner and outer world, man cannot reduce his experiences to a network of neatly predictable connections without losing the stimulating riches and surprises of life. Being complexly designed, man must function complexly if he is to be fully himself. And to this end, the setting in which he operates must also be complex. It has been long recognized that great works of man combined order with high complexity."(Rudolph Arnheim)

In 'GWUNDER', the seven main themes form a thread around which a net of relationships is formed by the texts and the associative image materials. This is the complexity as "multiplicity of relationships among the parts of an entity"(Arnheim), which I tried to create.

In order to discover some of these relationships, a viewer has to be able to remember what has been seen previously.

"Whilst part of what we perceive comes through our senses from the object before us, another part (and it may be the larger part) always comes out of our mind."(William James)

The fact that images or a text at the end of the book might have their importance for understanding the beginning makes it necessary for a viewer to go back to the beginning or to go through the whole book more than once. The book is one entity framed by the back and front covers and, although there is a definite

reading direction, the viewer is free to chose his or her own movements within this entity.

This is another reason why I -despite some criticism- still believe that the book form is the most effective means for my thesis project. One could sit in a comfortable chair and look at the book, put it away for a couple of days and read it again later. I see the exhibition form as a compromise which I had to make, because I was not able to present the project in an actually printed form. But I think I was able to translate some qualities of the book form into the framework of the gallery. Through the way I designed the exhibition, I was able to reflect the qualities I mentioned before: a more or less linear progression of themes embedded in a network of relationships, which is set up in a circle so that the viewer always ends up at the beginning. (See also the gallery plan in Chapter IV.)

Another factor which contributes to the complexity of my thesis project is that I deal with personal issues and theoretical or conceptual issues at the same time. I deliberately construct a personal aspect which goes beyond what Cornell Capa says:

"I see something, it goes through my eye, brain, heart, guts; I choose the subject. What could be more personal than that ?"

'GWUNDER' tells, on a personal level, my own development with the medium photography as I described it in Chapter I. As I stated in the purpose of my thesis project, my main intention was to challenge conventional visual relationships between reality and its depiction in the photograph.

"The thing represented had to pass through two distorting lenses: the artist's mind, and his medium of expression, before it emerged as a man-made dream- the two, of course, being intimately connected and interacting with each other." (Arthur Koestler)

"What a picture means to the viewer is strongly dependant on his past experience and knowledge. In this respect the visual image is not a mere representation of 'reality' but a symbolic system".
(E.H. Gombrich)

This quote illustrates very well what I did in my project: getting away from photography as a medium of mere representation by deliberate use of the photographic process and the intrusion of the photographer's mind in order to create an independent 'symbolic system'. By independent, I mean the following:

- a. technical independence: one should be able to choose the photographic technique best suited to the expression of a certain statement.
- b. stylistic independence: a photographer should be able to use stylistic qualities as means for making visual statements.
- c. personal independence: one should try to stand above the content and not always in the middle of it.

"The viewer is not seen as a passive and indifferent organism but rather as one who actively selects information, forms perceptual hypotheses, and on occasions distorts the input in the service of reducing surprise and of attaining valued objects."

(Jerome Bruner)

I am most grateful to the teachers who served on my thesis board who, along with a few other faculty members, gave me some really constructive advice. They certainly helped to make this thesis project an extremely positive and satisfying experience for me.

M. Gasser

August 1st, 1980

ziu

VI

gobwide
juflisch
chunnsch
dochnid
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what this country needs is more scouts
anything else is just a car
it comes with great milage too
the pump is free

·
Dinganggam, takut mati: dilapaskan, takut terbang.

*) see subject index

Arum Martini Gasser

OS-6930

MR. MARTIN GASSER



FOR PRIVATE USE \$300

Martin Gasser



Martin Gasser

Mr. Martin Gasser

Mr. Martin Gasser

Martin & Sherryah Gasser Harun

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gwunder

weninume
wüsst
was i auer
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weiswunder
wasfürne
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wett

i believe that what you get out of life
is what you put into it
just bring your old set
save as never before

Sebesar-besar bumi,
Aku tampar tak kena.

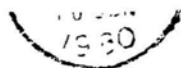
Mr.
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Herrn Martin Gasser



Mr. Martin Gasser

Mr.
Martin Gasser

Although it has spread enormously, nothing essentially new has been discovered in the principle and technique of photography since the process was invented. Every innovation since introduced - with the exception of X-ray photography - has been based on the artistic, reproductive concept prevailing in Daguerre's day (c.1830): reproduction (copy) of nature in conformity with the rules of perspective. (1,27)

In the exact mechanical procedures of photography and the film we possess an expressional means for representation which works incomparably better than did the manual procedures of the representational painting we have known hitherto. (1,9)

In the photography of earlier days the fact was completely neglected that the light-sensitivity of a chemically prepared surface (glass, metal, paper, celluloid, etc.) was one of the basic elements of the photographic process. This surface was never related to anything other than a camera obscura obeying the laws of perspective, for fixing (reproducing) individual objects in their special character as reflectors or absorbers of light. Nor were the potentialities of this combination ever sufficiently consciously exploited.

For if people had been aware of these potentialities they would have been able with the aid of the photographic camera to make visible existencies which can't be perceived or taken in by our optical instrument, the eye; i.e., the photographic camera can either complete or supplement our optical instrument, the eye. This principle has already been applied in a few scientific experiments, as in the study of movements (walking, jumping, galloping) and of zoological, botanical and mineral forms (enlargements, microscopic photographs) and other investigations into natural history; but these experiments have remained isolated phenomena, the interconnections of which have not been established. (1,28)

Creative use of this knowledge and these principles will silence those who contend that photography is not 'art'.

The human mind everywhere finds fields in which it can work creatively. Thus we shall very soon have to record great progress in the field of photography too. (1,33)

Earlier such futile thought had been devoted to the question of whether photography is an art. The primary question - whether the very invention of photography had not transformed the entire nature of art- was not raised. (2,229)

The secular cult of beauty, developed during the Renaissance and prevailing for three centuries, clearly showed that ritualistic basis in its decline and the first deep crisis which befell it. With the advent of the first truly revolutionary means of reproduction, photography, simultaneously with the rise of socialism, art sensed the approaching crisis which has become evident a century later. At the time, art reacted with the doctrine of *l'art pour l'art*, that is, with a theology of art. This gave rise to what might be called a negative theology in the form of the idea of 'pure' art, which not only denied any social function of art but also any categorizing by subject matter. (In poetry, Mallarme was the first to take this position.)

An analysis of art in the age of mechanical reproduction must do justice to these relationships, for they lead us to an all-important insight: for the first time in world history, mechanical reproduction emancipates the work of art from its parasitical dependence on ritual. To an ever greater degree the work of art reproduced becomes the work of art designed for reproducibility. From a photographic negative, for example, one can make any number of prints; to ask for the 'authentic' print makes no sense. But the instant the criterion of authenticity ceases to be applicable to artistic reproduction, the total function of art is reversed. Instead of being based on ritual, it begins to be based on another practice- politics. (2,226)

Evidently a different nature opens itself to the camera than opens to the naked eye -if only because an unconsciously penetrated space is substituted for a space consciously explored by man. (2,238)

The realization which came forcibly to light in this exhibition is related to the fact that photography is not merely a reproductive medium but also an instrument of free creation. The possibilities which lie in this direction seem to have been overlooked for decades, probably due to the fact that the invention of photography represented the realization of the ancient - and today almost incomprehensible - dream of the perfect, absolutely faithful reproduction of the external image. Photography made this dream come true - and it was employed in the visual arts to the point of absurdity since the new methods were so simple as regards technique that hardly any previous knowledge was necessary for the production of satisfactory images; in addition, the fascination of these faithful pictures was so great that the use of photographic methods for other kinds of images was largely neglected. (3,9)

It was inevitable that this situation should provide new fuel for the old question of whether or not photography can be regarded as an art. Whereas previously, however, the opponents of this thesis were able to refer to the purely reproductive quality of the camera, they no longer have this argument at their disposal. (4,52)

The question is asked in the wrong way: photography is a means, but 'art' is a program, like 'science' is a program, a program that reaches its manifestation through a means of communication. Looked upon the problem in this way, a comparison between art and photography is a comparison of two different levels: photography corresponds to 'hardware', the physical image carrier of information; and art corresponds to the program, the so-called software, the kind of information and its connections. (4,52)

The photographic process is a process of transformation: a given information (object) is transformed -with some loss of information (abstraction)- into visual information again. As a rule, the goal is maintaining the most of the given information. Beyond that, it is possible to add new information (gain of information) by photographic means. If the emphasis is put on the gaining of information, then we speak about 'image generating' or 'generative' photography. (4,50)

The creative process can take place in an abstract framework without the compulsion of immediate realization. It is sufficient to convert the idea into a formula, musical notation or programme; the idea-value of the aesthetic object is thus entirely separate from the material. Concepts like 'original' or 'unique' lose their significance. The possibility of reproduction and duplication is an integral part of the production process, and each realization of the idea is of equal value with all others. (4,117)

The uniqueness and also the time limitations of the Happening limited the durable documents of these events to photographs and films. Photography, because of its documentary quality, played an important role and was esteemed by the happening artists. During the sixties, this development continued and photography was able to reach an important position within the field of plastic arts as a medium for making statements.

In Land Art and in so-called Conceptual Art, photography fulfilled an important function as well as in Body Art and Process Art; partially, the realization of the artistic events took only place in the transmission of the ideas through photography. Some pieces of land art exist today only in the form of their documentation with photographs, because the pieces themselves were altered or even destroyed by environmental conditions. (5,167)

Photography, respectively in complicated concepts the photomontage, permits a very exact conveying of intentions, an exactness unreached by a mere text description. (5,169)

The connection between art avant-garde and photography can be seen not only in the photography's function as a carrier of information within an art work, but it also manifests itself in the work of photographers who are oriented towards avant-garde and have been influenced by the stylistic peculiarities of the art avant-garde. Trends in this direction can be seen in SEQUENCES with a variety of concepts. The principle of photographic sequence was already known in the last century and was used by Eadward Muybridge as a means for the exploration of motion. (5,173)

Suppose, photography is a proof of existence. (Especially in news photography. It is clear that this can lead to abuse. To rely on the 'moral' conscience/feeling of the photographer is rather careless.) If the existence of a piece of music is to be proved? What is it's existence anyway? (6,7)

The question of the format: should the picture fill the book format or not? A frame could emphasize the art character and the significance of the single image (since a book is 'framed' by the back and the front cover, the frames of the single images can be worked with as structured planes; they are part of the images;) i.e. it is not the question whether the images fill the book format or not, but how the borderzones should be organized.

On principle, parameters have to be defined.

Some goals: articulation of complex forms, execution of different processes, different 'events' on different levels, with different parameters at the same time. (6,9)

Should explanations about the book be put in? Why not. -But what should be said? A manifesto? -or for example some technical directions for example about the production? etc. (6,11)

In general: there are the proportions to be determined and planned. (Why anyway? Wouldn't it make more sense to proceed in a more empirical manner?-

I begin with the assumption that the compulsion to invent something leads to the invention. Thoughts and imaginations are easier to be invented/built: they should influence and determine the work. And: the strictness during the production will in any case effect the result: a composed book!). (6,14)

Into the lap of photography has fallen the task of representing nature true to herself by means of natural laws, a task that has led photography into encounters, not with that which was so obviously being portrayed (the What), but rather with the act of portraying (the How). The conditions of this How have regularly been determined by technical developments in photography. Painting, which, among other things, was rated by its capacity to portray reality, felt so threatened by this potentiality of photography that it underwent a process of self-examination, distanced itself from photography, and reflected on a new sense of its intrinsic means and possibilities. (7,17)

In photography, the photographer seeks to document his subjective feelings about the ways in which the world belongs to him -since, even with total objectivity, it is still always the photographer's eye behind the camera which selects the object and the point of view. The artist does not seek out an object for its own sake, but instead chooses one which helps him to render an idea or a train of thought pictorially graspable. For him, the photo is only a means to an end. (7,22)

In these procedures, which are designated 'conceptual' photography, photography becomes a means for representing concepts thought out in advance. The goal is a representation on as many levels as possible, which opens up a field of associations for the subjectivity of the viewer. He, in turn, must be first prepared to make the sort of intellectual commitment himself that he would normally bring to coping with the problems of existence today. (For example, taking the subway in a strange town requires an introduction to how it works.)

One assumes that such an introduction to the concept is necessary for any dialogue with this art form, which can

accordingly be experienced as a unique, new reality; a reality which is portrayed in each individual work by the totality of its levels of meaning, in connection with their content and appearance. (A given photograph remains -even when it has been artistically executed- only an image of reality. In itself, it does not produce any new reality, aside from its physical existence.) The new reality of the objet d'art comes into being when photography is brought into a context that lies outside of itself, as far as content and form are concerned, where the content determines the form. The multiplicity of appearances of this art form results from the variety of subjects portrayed and from the individuality of the artists. Each one uses photography differently and employs the whole range of photographic techniques, from documentary photography, to candid and trivial shots, to posed photography. (7,23)

Learning Contracts: Where no formal course of study is available to meet a student's interest and planned curriculum, individualized learning contracts may be negotiated with an instructor. These can take the form of an Independent Study or Photographic Museum Practice. In each case a well thought out and typed contract must be worked out and agreed upon by the student and sponsoring instructor and then approved by the Coordinator of the M.F.A. Photography program. The learning contracts must clearly state the learning objectives, the learning procedure to be followed and the basis for evaluation. Independent Study forms are available in the records office, room 2258, and must be completed properly. Since they will become a part of your graduate record, they should be typewritten.

Physical Resources: The M.F.A. Program is housed within the School of Photographic Arts and Sciences and includes the M.F.A. Center and the M.F.A. Darkrooms.

The M.F.A. Center includes a classroom with comfortable facilities for viewing prints, the M.F.A. Gallery and a nonsilver laboratory area which provides equipment necessary to pursue xerography, offset presswork, gum printing, etc.

The M.F.A. Darkrooms are reserved for M.F.A. students.

Definition of Grades: Grading designation in the graduate program is the same as that used in the undergraduate program. To be eligible for a graduate degree, however, the student must maintain a cumulative 'B' average (grade point average, G.P.A. of 3.0).

| GRADE DESIGNATION | QUALITY POINTS |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| A (Excellent) | 4 |
| B (Good) | 3 |
| C (Satisfactory) | 2 |
| D (Minimum passing) | 1 |
| ----- | |
| E (Conditional failure) | 0 |
| F (Failure) | 0 |
| I (Incomplete) | 0 |
| R (Registered) | 0 |
| S (Satisfactory) | 0 |
| T (Transfer) | 0 |
| W (Withdrawn) | 0 |
| X (Credit by examination) | 0 |
| Z (Audit) | 0 |

The thesis serves as both a culminating and expanding experience for each M.F.A. student, providing an opportunity to use photography as a means for creatively searching and exploring his visual environment. Success requires imagination, careful planning, craftsmanship, a willingness to take risks and face times of uncertainty, confusion and frustration.

Thesis proposal: The Roman scholar Seneca has written, 'Unless you know to which port you are sailing, no wind is favorable.' The purpose of the thesis

proposal is to clearly inform yourself, your board, and the MFA faculty as to your thesis destination and your plan for getting there. A considerable amount of energy will be invested before your research and thesis requirements are met. Keep this in mind when you prepare your proposal for a well written proposal is an indispensable first step.

Background: It is safe to assume that no matter what the nature of your thesis you will have been influenced by others along the way: photographs others have made; articles written; conversations; lectures and the like; your own personal thoughts and observations. The background information informs your audience why you are attempting the line of research proposed and what you hope to accomplish by it. This is often a personal commen-

tary.

Procedure: The stated purpose of your thesis establishes your destination so that you can properly 'set sail'. To reach your destination in a reasonable time requires a 'favorable wind' and that is the reason for establishing procedure. Give serious thought to writing your procedure and think of its components as markers and guidelines along the way. As you get into your research if you find that your written procedure is helping you reach your destination then(...)so that the winds are favorable.

PURPOSE: a. To make a number of straight photographs, outside of the USA. b. To manipulate these pictures in the dark-room (by photographic means) in order to transform them into different, unexpected, interesting, surreal, absurd, paradox, senseless, ridiculous or even stupid pictures. c. To add a selection of poems, captions, quotations, thoughts and comments with or without relation to the images. d. To put a, b, and c into the concept of a book (55 double pages), which will be planned in the minutest detail; but the book itself will not necessarily be printed.

PURPOSE: a. To take a number of 'realistic' photographs in Switzerland (Weinfelden, Frauenfeld, Zurich) and in Rochester. b. To manipulate these pictures in the darkroom (by photographic means) in order to transform them into images which explore and question the relations between reality and the photograph as a reality in itself. c. To sequence the photographs and add a selection of poems, captions, quotations, thoughts, comments with or without relation to the images.

PURPOSE: To produce a number of photographs which explore relations between these photographs and the reality they depict.

PURPOSE: To produce several series of photographs which explore and exemplify different relations between reality and the photographs as realities of their own.

PURPOSE: To produce several series of photographs which explore and exemplify

PURPOSE: To produce several series of photographs which show a manipulated reality through these photographs as realities of their own.

Purpose: The statement of purpose should be concise and clearly articulated. It should be neither too general nor so specific that it is restrictive and confining. One or two well composed and written sentences are adequate.

PURPOSE: To produce photographs and manipulate them so as they start to question the reality of the things depicted in these photographs.

PURPOSE: To take several series of 'realistic' photographs and manipulate them in the darkroom so that they start questioning the reality depicted and exploring its new relation to the photographs.

PURPOSE: To take/produce several series of realistic photographs and manipulate them in the darkroom so that they start questioning the reality depicted and their new relation to reality.

PURPOSE: To take several series of realistic photographs and manipulate them in the darkroom so that they start questioning the reality depicted and exploring the relation between the photograph as a reality of its own and the reality represented.

PURPOSE: To take several series of realistic photographs and manipulate them in the darkroom so that they start questioning obvious relations and exploring new relations between reality and the photograph as a reality of its own and the photograph and the viewer.

PURPOSE: To produce several series of realistic photographs and manipulate them (at any time during the process of making them).

PURPOSE: To make several series of realistic photographs and manipulate them (at any point during the process in hidden or obvious ways) so that they start questioning obvious relations and exploring new relations between reality and the photograph as a new reality of its own.

PURPOSE: To make several series of realistic photographs and manipulate them (at any point during the process in hidden or obvious ways) so that they start questioning obvious relations and to explore new relations between reality and the photograph as a new reality of its own.

PURPOSE: To make a series of realistic photographs and manipulate them so that normal relationships within a scene such as tone and shape are altered to create new experiences.

PURPOSE: To make a series of manipulated photographs which challenge conventional relations between reality and its depiction in the photograph.

PURPOSE: To make a series of manipulated photographs which challenge conventional relationships between reality and its depiction in the photograph.

PURPOSE: To make a series of manipulated photographs which challenge conventional relations between the scene and its depiction in the photograph.

| | |
|-------|---------------|
| Perle | Medium Weight |
| Perle | Medium 180 |

| | |
|-----------|---|
| ILFOSPEED | 2 |
| 2.44M | 2 |

| | |
|---------------|---|
| 2.44M 79C-306 | 2 |
| ILFOSPEED | 2 |

Safelight S902 (light brown)
 Ecran inactinique S902 (brun clair)
 Schutzfilter S902 (hellbraun)
 Filtro di sicurezza S902 (bruno chiaro)
 Luz de seguridad S902 (pardo claro)
 Mörkrumsfilter S902 (ljusbrunt)

| | |
|------------|-----------------|
| Perle | Halbkarton |
| Perla | peso medio |
| Perla | Peso intermedio |
| Parllyster | Medeltjockt |

| | |
|-----------|---|
| ILFOSPEED | 2 |
| 2.44M | 2 |

ILFORD FP4 35mm FILM FP4 is a medium speed black and white film for general purpose photography. Load and unload as recommended by camera manufacturer, in subdued light.

DEVELOPMENT See table of development times and film speeds. Agitation continuous for the first 10 seconds - then 10 seconds (or four inversions) every minute. 'Normal contrast' and 'high contrast' refer to the negative contrast required for printing in a condenser and diffuser enlarger respectively.

Thesis Project and Display: The thesis proposal marks the beginning of the Research and Thesis requirements for certification. Following the proposal is the Thesis Project and then, the Written Report. You can think of the thesis project and display as having three phases:

1. production or gathering of data
2. display
3. sharing

Display: After your thesis project is completed and properly edited, arrangements need to be made for display in the M.F.A. Gallery or other appropriate facility.

Sharing: Thesis sharing is an important part of the thesis experience for all members of the MFA community; candidate, students and faculty, and other members of the school and community as well.

Thesis Report: This is the written component of the research and thesis requirement which often takes several months, and in some cases, years to complete. Candidates often put all of their energies into the thesis project and underestimate the effort required for the written report. Plan wisely for the written component of the thesis as well as the picture component.

The following sequence is suggested for the written report:

- a. Title page (see p.12)
- b. Permission-to-copy form (see p.11)
- c. Dedication (optional)
- d. Table of contents
- e. Illustrative material index
- f. Introduction
- g. Discussion
- h. Conclusion
- i. Bibliography
- j. Appendix

For matters of form and style in the thesis report a standard reference should be followed consistently and should be included as an item in the Bibliography. The recommended reference is Turabian, K., Manual For Writers of Term Papers, Thesis and Dissertations. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973. It is available in our Bookstore and in the R.I.T. Library.

Commencement: Students are required to attend the commencement where they will be cited for the M.F.A. degree. If attendance constitutes a hardship, the student may petition the Dean requesting permission to receive the degree 'in absentia'. The Dean will act on the request on the basis of its validity and notify the student of the decision.

M. Gasser

ABOUT MYSELF

I was born in Switzerland in 1955 and attended primary school at Weinfelden, highschool at Frauenfeld and college at Zurich. Since Fall 1978 I have been a graduate student at RIT.

RESUME

Work of mine was never exhibited (neither one-man shows nor group shows) in any of the following galleries:

Canon Photo Gallery, Geneva
Photo Gallery Portfolio, Lausanne
Photogalerie Kunsthaus, Zurich
Nikon-Fotogalerie, Zurich
Fotogalerie Forum Stadtpark, Graz
Galerie des Fotoforums, Kassel
Galerie Zabriskie, Paris
The Witkin Gallery, New York
Light Gallery, New York
Janet Lehr, New York
ICP, New York
Castelly Graphics, New York
Marcuse Pfeifer Gallery, New York
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Museum of Modern Art, New York
International Museum of Photography, Rochester

Photographs of mine have not been published in the following publications and books:

Camera Magazine, Lucerne
DU, Zurich
Nikon News, Zurich
Print Letter, Zurich
Photo Magazin, Munich
Photo, Paris
Modern Photography, New York
Popular Photography, New York
Photography Annual, New York

History of Photography, Eder
A Concise History of Photography, Gernsheim
The History of Photography, Newhall
Die Geschichte der Photographie, Baier
Die Geschichte der Photographie im 20. Jahrhundert, Tausk

October 23, 1979

PRESENT: Profs.; Arnold, Butler, Pfahl, Rubenstein,
Timmerman, Zakia. Student Representative:
Flecky. Assistant: Obermeyer

- Item 1 Discussion of Martin Gasser's Thesis Proposal -
Mr. Timmerman moved that the committee not consider the thesis proposal until it is better written. Mr. Pfahl said that the proposal had seemed clear to him but perhaps it was because he knew Mr. Gasser's work. Mr. Butler suggested that samples of the work be brought in when the proposal was presented again. The committee gave Mr. Gasser specific suggestions that would help make the proposal more clear. Mr. Zakia offered to work with Mr. Gasser on the proposal. Mr. Butler suggested that Mr. Gasser's thesis proposal be made a subject for discussion in Pre Thesis Seminar. Mr. Gasser said that he had misunderstood the purpose of the thesis proposal. He thought that its purpose was to explain what he wanted to do to his board, a select number of people who were familiar with his work. The committee explained that in order to approve the board and its appropriateness for the thesis they must be able to understand the thesis proposal. Mr. Rubenstein said that the thesis proposal when posted with the thesis show was a helpful aid towards understanding the thesis for those unfamiliar with its purpose.
- Item 2 Mr. Zakia opened up the meeting for discussion of the form the governance should take. It was proposed that the MFA Committee be dissolved and that it be replaced with the MFA Faculty in order to bring the governance in line with other groups in the School of Photographic Arts and Sciences. Mr. Flecky brought up the fact that the function of the MFA Committee had changed over the years especially in terms of faculty evaluation of the first year students. The Outside Advisory Board was discussed and it was agreed to keep it as part of the governance. It was agreed to continue the governance discussion at the next meeting.

NEXT MEETING IS TUESDAY NOVEMBER 5 AT 12:00

cc: Dr. Kraus
Dr. Engelmann
Prof. Gleason

mainly meeting Oct. - 3 12 noon

95

1 subject Thesis proposal

1. Trimmerman better written

more specific, smoother, don't understand
Aish, it have time to read it carefully

THESIS PROPOSAL

Intention of "Manipulation" Project

Rochester Institute of Technology

School of Photographic Arts and Sciences

M.F.A.-Photography

Charles everybody has to understand
overly wordy, not to read

'G W U N D E R'

over -> 1/2 hour seminar
Page 10

Shorter sentences, simplify

Bakstein -> 1/2 hour

Martin Gasser

October 15, 1979

Title: 'Gwunder'

Submitted by: Martin Gasser

Thesis Board: Mr. Richard D. Zakia (chairman)

College of Graphic Arts and Photography
Rochester Institute of Technology

Mr. John Pfahl

College of Graphic Arts and Photography
Rochester Institute of Technology

Mr. Hans Zandvoort

College of General Studies
Rochester Institute of Technology

Special Advisors: Mr. Herbert J. Johnson

School of Printing
Rochester Institute of Technology

Mr. Werner Rebsamen

School of Printing
Rochester Institute of Technology

Purpose: To make ^a ~~several~~ series of realistic photographs and manipulate them ~~(at any point during the process in hidden or obvious ways)~~ so that they start questioning obvious relations and to explore new relations between reality and the photograph as a new reality of its own.

Scope and Background

Since I seriously started studying photography as a medium of communication in 1974, I have been interested in the possibilities of having a ~~directed influence on~~ ^{manipulating} the photographic process in order to ~~manipulate~~ ^{alter} reality, as it would be perceived through the photographic print. At first my explorations were purely scientific, but later, under the influence of my teacher Dr. F. Tomamichel and the movement 'Generative Photographie' in Germany, I became more creatively visual statements in the form of series of photographs. These series explored and exemplified ^{Basic} manipulations such as focus, perspective, format, scale, ^{tonality} and others ^{were explored}. Such examinations made me understand that any photograph represented only one of an infinite number of possible ^{representations} ~~documentations~~ or interpretations of a particular part of reality. As a consequence I lost my interest in documenting or representing reality with all its superficial details.

Under the influence of photographic work published by the 'Fotoforum Kassel' and my cooperation with my brother, Ulrich Gasser, who is a composer of Avant-Garde music, I became interested in ^{"Process"} processes as form and content of my imagery. I tried to express thoughts I had about ^{personal} ~~certain~~ ^{issues} ~~things~~ (my environment, my work) through series of photographs, in which ^{multiple} ~~relationships between objects~~ it became much more important to see ^{relationships between objects} the kind of objects I chose (rather ~~and environments~~ ^{rather than the individual objects themselves}), what I did with them, with what ^{or specific objects and environments} kind of objects I would confront them and in what environment, and how I would let things happen in a whole sequence.

I create my own reality in my photographs, which then become independent realities ^{resulting} (the print as an object and its content); for me, these new realities are most carefully thought out and previsualized, for other people new and often surprising.

~~I don't want them to be fantasies or surrealistic dream-like situations;~~
(Rather than dealing with surrealistic or fantasy situations in photographs were concerned with

the notion of reality and the photographic depiction of reality.
they have to be as close as possible to the common idea of reality to be able to communicate just this difference between this idea of reality and the one in my photographs. It is just like in music: ~~hearing~~ ^{two tones at the same time} simultaneously two tones on the scale next to each other shows the fact that there are two different tones much stronger (because it produces very disturbing friction), than if one is hearing two tones far away from each other.

In my thesis, I ~~will expand on my previous investigations~~ ^{will expand on my previous investigations} want to recreate the learning process I went through so far in a compact body of work, capable of communicating my experiences. ~~Specific~~ ^{will be} the subject matter is only important insofar as it reflects ~~local positions~~ ^{locations} of my learning process (hometown Weinfelden, highschool in Frauenfeld, college in Zurich, RIT in Rochester). Poems, captions, quotations (visual as well as verbal) ~~(also visual)~~, thoughts and comments are used to enrich the whole body of work and to provoke ^{different levels of} associations and further thoughts on different levels.

Special consideration will be given to sequencing and presenting this work. As an alternative or addition to the thesis show, I will ~~also think~~ ^{consider} about the possibility of presenting the work in book form. ~~A book, because the 'final print' is often not the last stage, a photograph reaches, a photograph will be printed.~~

My thesis show will include ~~an unspecified number of~~ ^{about 35} photographs ~~as well as~~ ^{as} original and printed, written and drawn material documenting my work.

Since my photographs themselves belong to the same category of realities I discussed at the beginning, they again are open to an infinite number of documentations and interpretations and are therefore much less important than the thoughts they provoke.

two tones next to each other on the scale play a stronger presence, than two tones further apart.

Procedures*Personalized*

I have taken photographs in Switzerland (Summer 1979) and I will take photographs in Rochester (Fall and Winter 1979/80) with a 35mm camera and black and white film. The film will be processed in the darkroom and contact sheets will be made.

After carefully examining the contacts I will choose the pictures which *will provide the best opportunity for altering reality*. ~~would lend themselves to express a certain idea I conceived before. In~~
~~I will then~~
 the next step I print these photographs in 8X10 inch size and plan the manipulations in detail, ~~so that I can incorporate them in the final enlarging process.~~

After ~~all the series are finished~~ *prints are made*, I will add the texts and documentary materials according to content *The work will be presented as a* ~~and formal concept of the thesis show, and the book alternative.~~

Bibliography

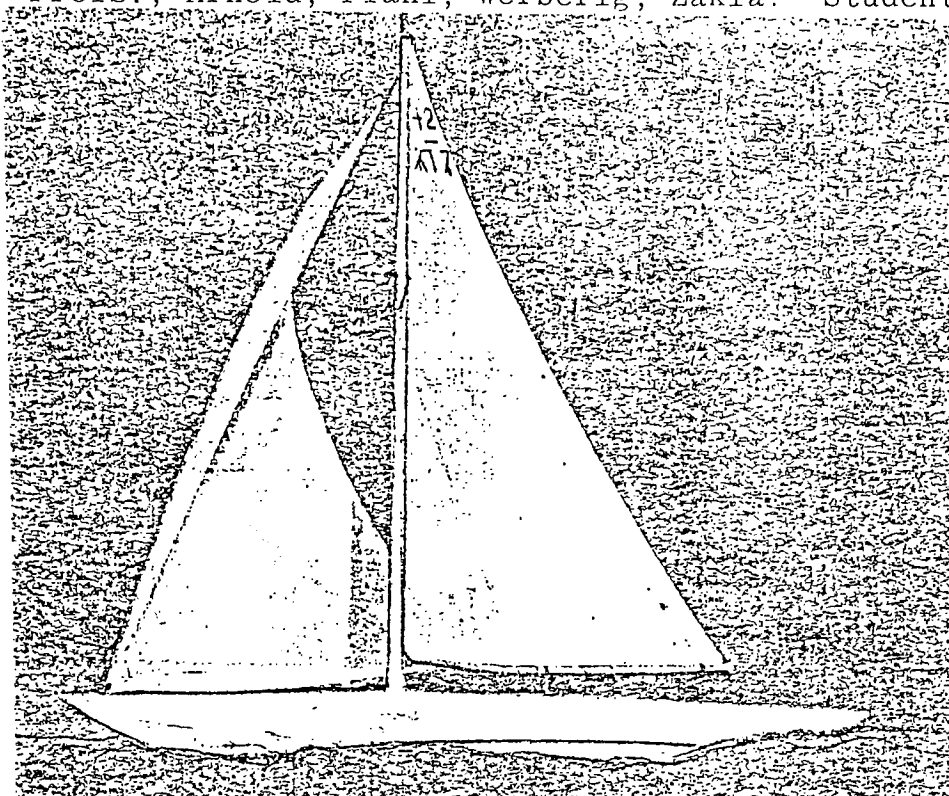
- Benjamin, Walter, Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit. Frankfurt, Suhrkamp Verlag, 1931
- Freund, Gisèle, Photographie und bürgerliche Gesellschaft. München, Rogner und Bernhard, 1936
- Kahnen, Volker, Fotografie als Kunst. Tübingen, Wasmuth, 1973
- Moholy-Nagy, Laszlo, Malerei, Fotografie, Film. Mainz, Kupferberg, 1925
- Neusüss, Floris M., Photography as Art- Art as Photography. Köln, DuMont Buchverlag, 1979
- Scharf, Aaron, Art and Photography. Penguin Books, 1968
- Tausk, Petr, Die Geschichte der Fotografie im 20. Jahrhundert. Köln, DuMont Buchverlag, 1977
- Tschichold, Jan, Foto-Auge. Stuttgart, 1929

MFA MINUTES

October 23, 1979

... first meeting on proposal, was Oct 23

Present: Profs.; Arnold, Pfahl, Werberig, Zakia. Student



- Item 1 - [redacted] signature
[redacted] then
- Item 2 - [redacted]
- Item 3 - [redacted] ing professor.
[redacted] Lyons
[redacted] in the

Item 4 - Martin Gasser's Thesis Proposal Gwunder - Mr. Zakia gave Mr. Rubensteins comments on the proposal. Mr. Arnold asked how well Mr. Gasser knew Mr. Zandnoort who is on his board. Mr. Gasser replied he had had two courses with him. The faculty approved the thesis board.

Item 5 - Stephen Piper's thesis proposal Gesture and Attitude. Mr. Zakia stated that he had talked with Mr. Piper about his recommendations and suggested that he tap into visual anthropological work and include Man Watching, Hidden Dimensions and Silent Language in his bibliography. It was also suggested that Mr. Piper look at an MFA thesis by Charles Slatkin, Dynamic Result of Gesture. Mr. Pfahl questioned whether the purpose of the thesis as stated was a sociological study or an artistic statement. Mr. Werberig who was representing Mr. Piper at the meeting replied that it was intended to be an artistic statement in line with the MFA concept.

THESIS PROPOSAL

Rochester Institute of Technology
School of Photographic Arts and Sciences
M.F.A.-Photography

' G W U N D E R '

Martin Gasser
October 15, 1979

Title: 'Gwunder'

Submitted by: Martin Gasser

Thesis Board: Mr. Richard D. Zakia (chairman)

College of Graphic Arts and Photography
Rochester Institute of Technology

Mr. John Pfahl

College of Graphic Arts and Photography
Rochester Institute of Technology

Mr. Hans Zandvoort

College of General Studies
Rochester Institute of Technology

Special Advisors: Mr. Herbert J. Johnson

School of Printing
Rochester Institute of Technology

Mr. Werner Rebsamen

School of Printing
Rochester Institute of Technology

Purpose: To make a series of manipulated photographs which challenge conventional relationships between reality and its depiction in the photograph.

Scope and Background: Since I seriously started studying photography as a medium of expression and communication in 1974, I have been interested in the possibilities of manipulating the photographic process in order to alter reality. At first, my explorations were purely scientific, but later,

under the influence of my teacher Dr. F. Tomamichel and the movement 'Generative Photographie' in Germany, they became more art-oriented. Basic manipulations such as focus, perspective, format, scale, tonality were explored. These examinations made me understand that any photograph represented only one of an infinite number of possible representations and interpretations. As a consequence I lost my interest in documenting or 'representing' reality with all its superficial details.

Under the influence of photographic work published by the 'Fotoforum Kassel' and my cooperation with my brother, Ulrich Gasser, who is a composer of Avant-Garde music, I became interested in 'process' as form and content of my imagery. I tried to express thoughts I had about personal and aesthetic issues through multiple series of photographs. It became more important to see relationships between objects and environments rather than representations of specific objects and environments.

My photographs were not just dealing with surrealistic or fantastic situations, they also became concerned with the precise difference between the common notion of reality and the photographic depiction of reality. This concern will be the most important issue in my thesis. I will expand on my previous investigations in a compact body of work. Specific subject matter will only be important insofar as it reflects locations of my previous work (hometown Weinfelden, highschool in Frauenfeld, college in Zurich, RIT in Rochester). Poems, captions, quotations and comments will be used to enrich the whole body of work and to provoke different levels of associations and thoughts.

Special consideration will be given to sequencing and presenting this work. As an alternative or addition to the thesis show, I will consider the possibility of presenting the work in book form, because the 'final print' is often not the last stage.

My thesis show will include about 55 photographs in various sizes as well as written and drawn material documenting my work.

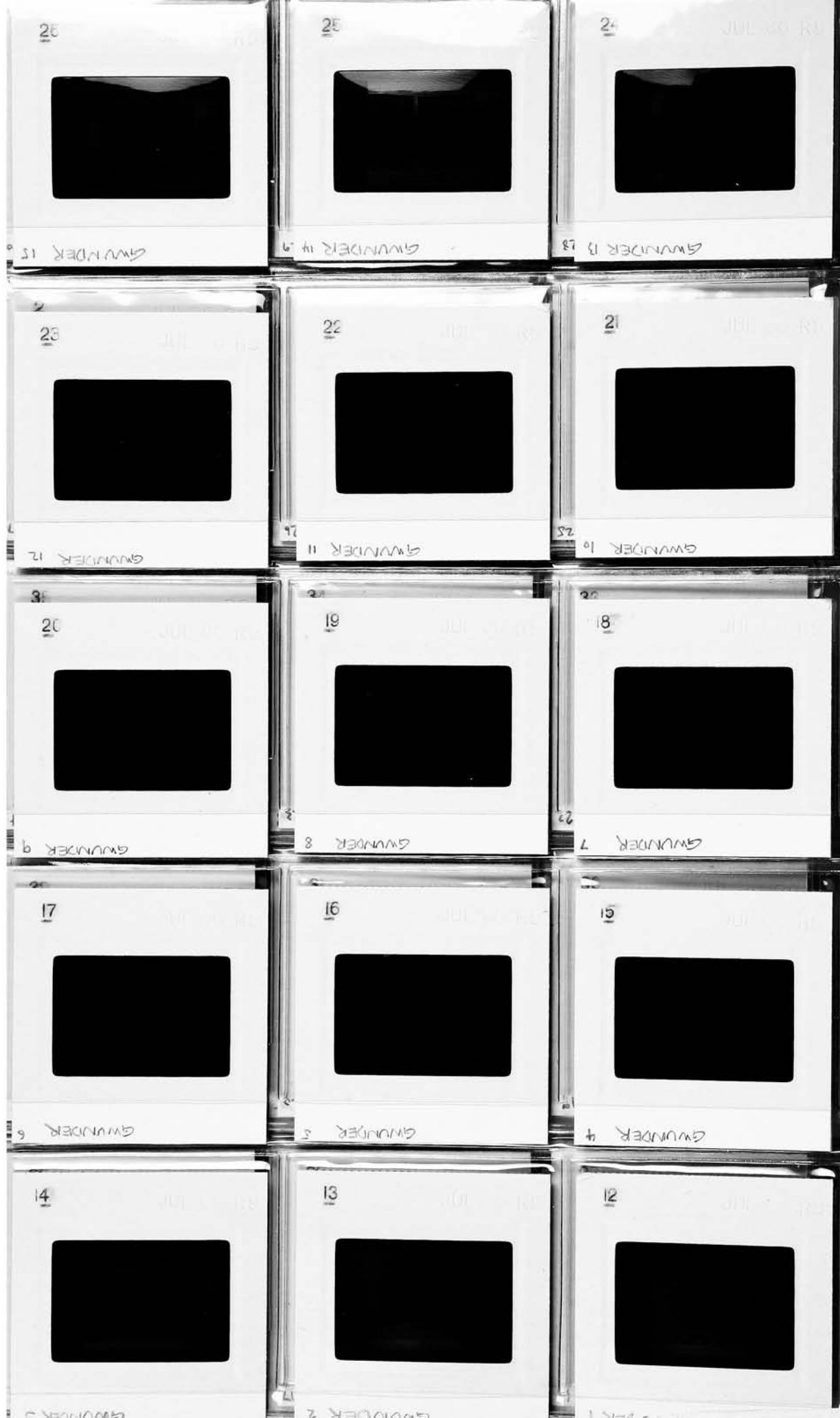
Procedure: In order to produce these manipulated photographs, I will make use of all possible kinds of manipulations within the scene, during exposure (perspective, focus, exposure time etc.) and during printing (for example combination printing).

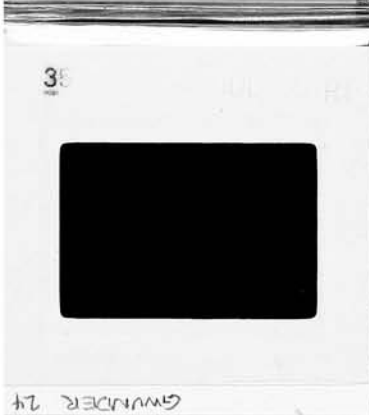
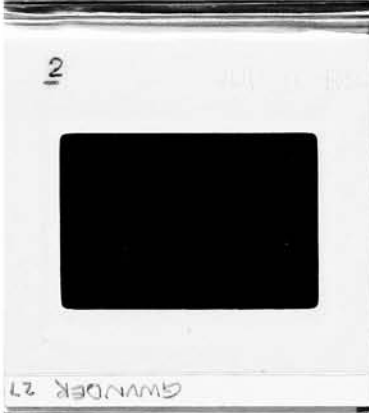
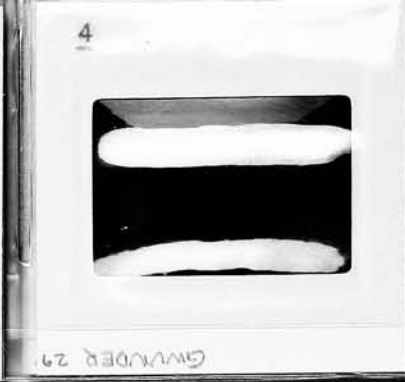
I have taken photographs in Switzerland (Summer 1979) and I will take photographs in Rochester (Fall and Winter 1979/80) with a 35mm camera and black and white film according to my preconceived ideas and concepts. From contact sheets I will choose the pictures for 'straight' enlargement and those which I planned to manipulate further and print them in 8X10 inch size. Then I will prepare the manipulations in detail and include them in the final printing process.

After the prints are made, I will add the texts and documentary materials.

Bibliography:

- Benjamin, Walter, Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit. Frankfurt, Suhrkamp Verlag, 1931
- Freund, Gisèle, Photographie und bürgerliche Gesellschaft. München, 1936
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- Tausk, Petr, Die Geschichte der Fotografie im 20. Jahrhundert. Köln, 1977
- Tschichold, Jan, Foto-Auge. Stuttgart, 1929





GWUNDER 31



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GWUNDER 32



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GWUNDER 33



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GWUNDER 34



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GWUNDER 35



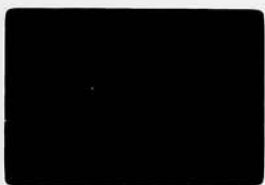
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GWUNDER 36



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GWUNDER 37



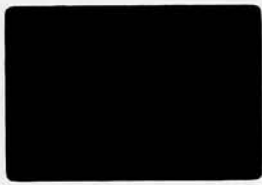
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GWUNDER 38



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GWUNDER 39



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GWUNDER 40



GWUNDER 41



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GWUNDER 42



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GWUNDER 43



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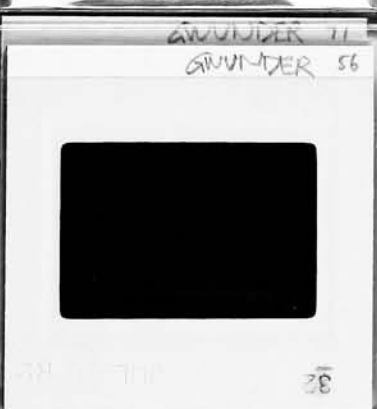
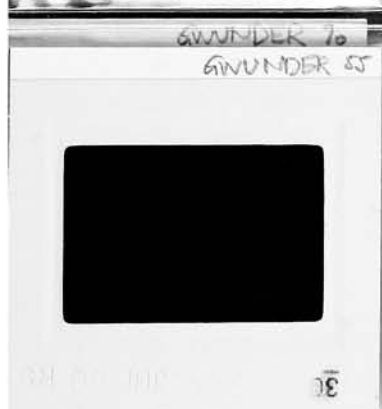
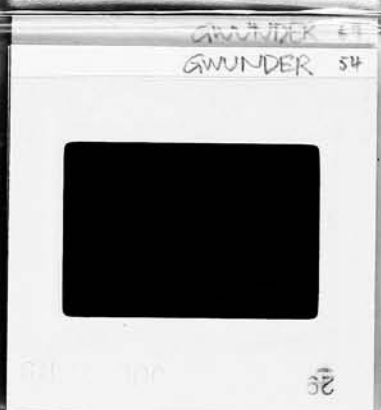
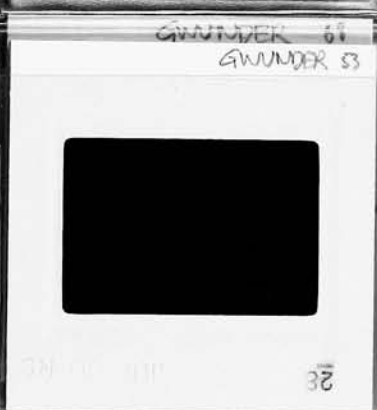
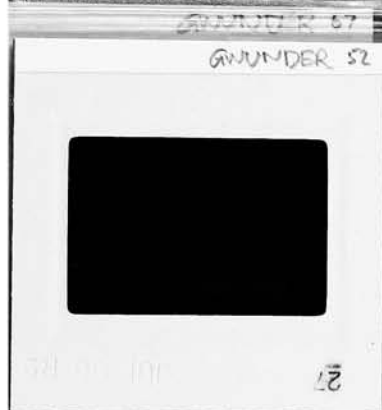
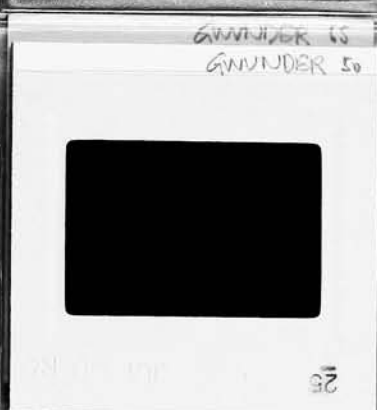
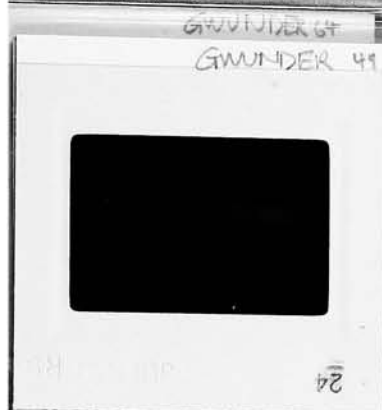
GWUNDER 44

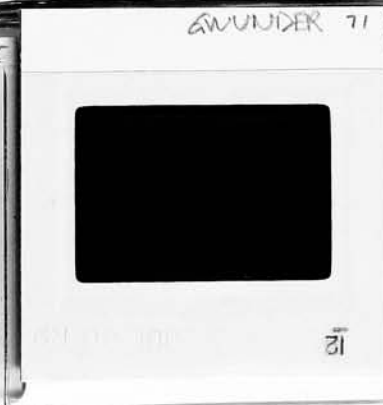
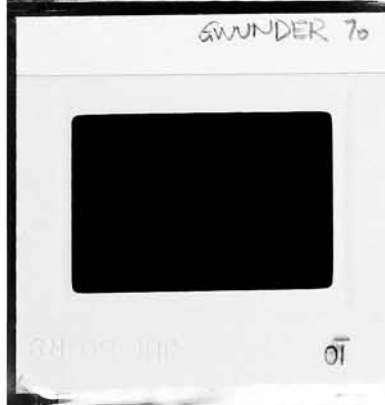
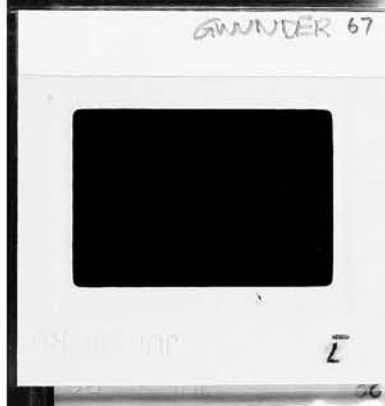
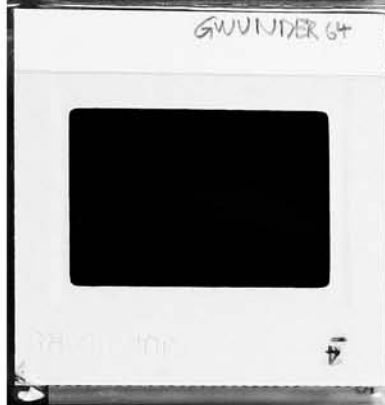


GWUNDER 45



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GWUNDER 76



16

GWUNDER 77



17

GWUNDER 78



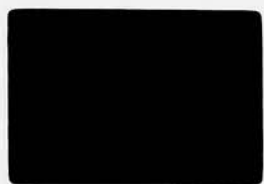
18

GWUNDER 79



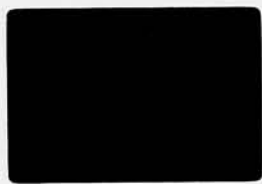
19

GWUNDER 80



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GWUNDER 81



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GWUNDER 82



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GWUNDER 83



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GWUNDER 84



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GWUNDER 85



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GWUNDER 86



26

GWUNDER 87



27

GWUNDER 88



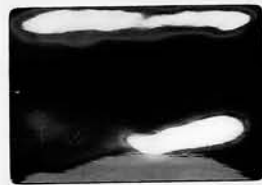
28

GWUNDER 89



29

GWUNDER 90



30

GWUNDER 91



3E

GWUNDER 92



3E

GWUNDER 93



3E

GWUNDER 94



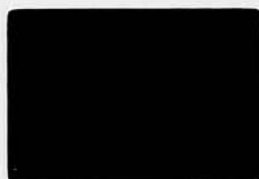
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GWUNDER 95



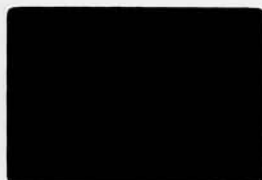
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GWUNDER 96



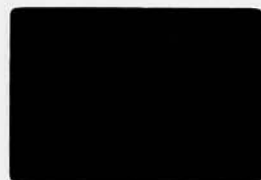
3E

GWUNDER 97



1

GWUNDER 98



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GWUNDER 99



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GWUNDER 100



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GWUNDER 101



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GWUNDER 102



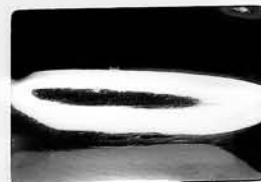
6

GWUNDER 103



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GWUNDER 104



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GWUNDER 105



6

GWUNDER 106



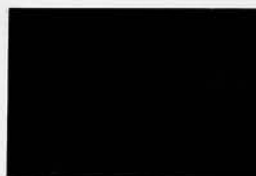
10

GWUNDER 107



11

GWUNDER 108



GWUNDER 109



12

GWUNDER 110

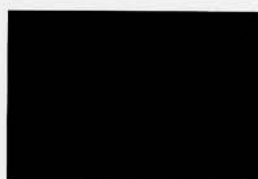


GWUNDER 111

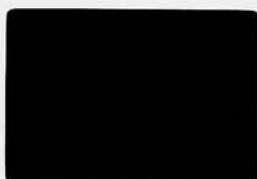


13

GWUNDER 112



GWUNDER 113



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GWUNDER 114



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GWUNDER 115



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GWUNDER 116



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GWUNDER 117



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GWUNDER 118



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GWUNDER 119



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GWUNDER 120



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GWUNDER 121



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POSTER, GWUNDER 122



=1

GWUNDER 123



20 -03ATH

GWUNDER 124



10 -03ATH

GWUNDER 125



00 -03ATH

GWUNDER 126



30 -03ATH

GWUNDER 127



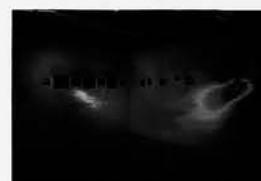
50 -03ATH

GWUNDER 128



80 -03ATH

GWUNDER 129



90 -03ATH